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PHYSICAL TRAINING.

Physical training is something so imperfectly understood, too liable to be carried to excess or quite neglected, that we give below lengthy extracts from an admirable paper thereon, by Professor J. Madison Watson, read at the late meeting of the American Public Health Association at Detroit :

Physical training is the essential, in the evolution of animal life from the lower type and state to the highest excellence. Let it be sharply discriminated from physical exercise. The latter, necessary to mere existence, is primarily secured by an irresistible impulse of nature, common alike to man and the lower animals. The kitten, the puppy, the young hare, the colt, the calf, the lamb, the kid, the fawn and the child skip, dance, race, romp, frolic, and enjoy to the utmost their muscular sense in hearty sympathy.

In their primitive state, Jehovah pronounced all living creatures *very good*, not perfect. Even man, made in the image of God, and having dominion over every living thing of earth, "infirm of purpose," was saved only by work, discipline, training. Man, the provident and wise trainer, co-worker with the Deity, has a mission high, holy, limitless. * * * In this presence it would be as much a work of supererogation to urge the importance of physical culture, as that of pure air or living water. And still, in practice, even men of eminence in the learned profes-

sions, who encourage every wise effort for special mental training, are too commonly content with vague and general bodily exercise, which makes nothing for aptitude, special efficiency, or symmetrical development. The whole history of physical training is a most extraordinary exhibition of man's fickleness and pitiable vascillations. At one period made fierce, savage and aggressive by exclusive and overdone bodily discipline—illiterate, immersed in narrow specialties, and despising all beyond ; at another, deifying the mind at the expense of the body and lapsing into decadence.

In ancient Attica and Ionia these two antagonist errors were first co-ordinated. The powers of the mind and the body were developed in common, and the resultants were incomparable beauty of bodily form and feature ; a language unrivalled in sweetness, expressiveness and perfection ; the highest philosophy ; the truest and most inimitable art. In this century, the adoption of a like educational policy by Prussia, during the life of Bismarck has accomplished results quite as wonderful as the most marvelous of antiquity.

In the last two decades we have made a decided advance in the science of physiology and hygiene. The elemental laws of health, so generally disseminated, are not without promise of fruitage. Physicians of every school readily employ a modified *materia medica*, trusting less to drugs and more to air, water, electricity, dress, exercise, and other natural agents.